

inquiry that led to the arrest and conviction of a number of Soviet-fostered agents operating in Canada. His promotion to Deputy Commissioner followed on Mar. 11, 1947, a rank that made him the second highest guiding figure behind the Dominion's law-enforcement machinery.

A genial man of public spirit, the late Deputy Commissioner contributed in countless ways to whatever community he happened to be in. Witty, engaging, his was a pleasing personality, and in his personal relations he coupled a courtliness of manner with a rich sociability that attracted many friendships. Wherever his duties took him his rich gaiety of spirits brought him friends, and particularly is this true of Montreal which came to appreciate him in a way that will colour his memory with a warmth of affection.

Deputy Commissioner Gagnon's brilliant career was on the point of acquiring new lustre, for he was slated, had he lived, to succeed to the commissionership. But this was not to be; Fate, that inexplicable arbiter of human destiny, intervened—denied him this crowning consummation of his ambition. If a man dies when he is on the point of reaching the summit of his calling there is bound to be speculation on what changes he might have wrought had he attained his goal. Though such speculation is idle—there is no way of assessing what one might have done—it may be said truly that Deputy Commissioner Gagnon was equipped by experience and training to contribute to the Force's glory, and in vital times like these when the fabric of the Force's handiwork is so complex it is a regrettable loss that a hand so capable and skilled should be turned from the loom.

High tributes have been paid this departed son of the Force, and when Commissioner Wood spoke in grateful appreciation of his outstanding service he did homage in behalf of all R.C.M.P. personnel. The Rt. Hon. Mr. J. L. Ilsley, Minister of Justice and Minister in Control of the Force, had this to say of him:

"His whole career as an officer of the Force was well worthy of its high traditions. To executive capacity of a high order he added an unflinching sense of duty, the highest character qualifications and an intellectual approach to consideration of police problems which gave him much distinction. The Force and the country have suffered a great loss".

Memory of the dead is their best monument, and though Deputy Commissioner Gagnon has passed from this mortal coil he will continue in the memory and affections of many both in the Force and out of it. The benefits of his achievements are now interwoven into the Force's traditions to enrich its heritage to those of the future. On such things the strength of the Force greatly rests.

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Having completed 35 years' service in the Force Commr. S. T. Wood, C.M.G., is eligible for retirement although still well below the age limit of 63 set by statute. In an announcement made public on Jan. 16, 1948, the Rt. Hon.

The Commissioner Stays Mr. J. L. Ilsley, Minister of Justice and Minister in Control of the Force, said that at the request of the Government Commissioner Wood will continue as Commissioner of the R.C.M.P. for an indefinite period. Commenting on this decision the *Ottawa Journal* in an editorial recalls that Commissioner Wood joined the Force direct from Royal Military College in 1912, and goes on to say:

"He is too useful a man to Canada to be placed on the shelf at his present age. Shy of any form of personal publicity and seldom in the public eye, Commissioner Wood is one of the least known to the general public among senior public servants. He has been head of the famous Force since 1938, saw it expand and grow during the war years when most internal counter-espionage work was under his direction. Under him the R.C.M.P. has extended its work and usefulness, now polices several provinces and conducts police schools where members of all police forces can be trained in scientific work.

"Commissioner Wood is a true son of the Force (his father was an assistant commissioner) and he has served in almost every part of Canada. His early schooling was obtained in Dawson City and he spent many years on duty in the Far North. One of his ambitions is to see part of the Force again mounted on horses, largely for